



U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney

Eastern District of Pennsylvania

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615 Chestnut Street

Suite 1250

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106-4476

(215) 861-8200

For Immediate Release

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## **FORMER TELEVISION NEWS ANCHOR SENTENCED FOR COMPUTER CRIME**

PHILADELPHIA - Lawrence Mendte, 51, of Philadelphia, was sentenced today to three years of probation, with six months of home confinement, for a single felony count of intentionally accessing a protected computer without authorization and obtaining information, announced Acting United States Attorney Laurie Magid. In addition to the sentence, United States District Court Magistrate Mary McLaughlin ordered Mendte to pay a \$5,000 fine, perform 250 hours of community service and to submit to monitoring of his computer.

“We live in an age in which we frequently exchange and share personal, sensitive information via email every day,” said Magid. “This case and conviction are significant, not for the personalities involved but because the integrity of private, confidential Internet communication must be preserved. In this case, not only was personal and attorney-client information viewed but it was leaked to the media.”

Mendte, a former employee of KYW-TV, admitted he illegally gained access to the personal email accounts of former colleague Alycia Lane for more than two years, between March 2006 and May 26, 2008. Mendte admitted buying a keycatcher in order to obtain the password to Lane’s email accounts. Between January 1, 2008 and May 26, 2008, Mendte accessed Lane’s personal e-mail accounts approximately 537 times from his home computer, from a computer at his vacation home, and from a computer at his place of work. He accessed private communications between the victim and others, including attorney-client privileged information, relating to both civil and criminal litigation in which Lane was involved. Mendte then allegedly repeatedly shared information regarding the contents of the private e-mail communications with a newspaper reporter.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation Cyber Squad and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Michael L. Levy.

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**UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
EASTERN DISTRICT, PENNSYLVANIA  
Suite 1250, 615 Chestnut Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19106**

**Contact: PATTY HARTMAN  
Media Contact  
215-861-8525**

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